aims at water conservation with enhanced efficiency, especially relevant to rainfed areas.

It has also been decided to set up a National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) to, inter alia, prepare a prospective plan and evolve policy guidelines for development of Rainfed/Dryland Farming System.

(e) The Government is following a multi-pronged strategy to maximize agricultural production and productivity through programmes designed to promote resource conservation technologies; enhancement in seed replacement; balnced use of fertilizer; in-situ moisture conservation; and enhanced water use efficiency. The emphasis is also to promote crop diversification and follow a regionally differentiated strategy based on the agro climatic conditions for accelerating crop output growth.

Vacancies in Indian Council of Agricultural Research

*186. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how many posts of scientific nature are vacant in the Indian Council of Agricultural Research;

(b) the reasons for not filling these posts;

(c) whether keeping so many posts vacant has not hindered the progress of various research schemes; and

(d) how long it would take to fill all these vacant posts?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Presently there are 1462 vacancies in the scientific cadre at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

(b) Filling up of vacancies was affected by the restrictions imposed by department of Personnel & Training Office Memorandum dated 16 05.2001.

(c) and (d) The work has been managed by judicious redeployment of available manpower. Enhancement of the age of superannuation of Scientists in ICAR from 60 to 62 years from October, 2003 also helped to reduce the shortfall. Steps have been initiated to get all vacancies in the scientific cadre filled up on top priority basis.